

VZCZCXRO7756
RR RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHKP #0330 2960244
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 230244Z OCT 09
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1318
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0776
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0307
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0354
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1903
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 2760
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 4642
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUCNFB/FBI WASHDC
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L KARACHI 000330

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: REASON 1.4(B) AND (D) DECL: 10/22/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KCRM](#) [KCRS](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: BALOCHISTAN - HR COMMISSION DESCRIBES TARGETED KILLINGS,
KIDNAPPINGS, AND TALIBAN

¶1. (C) Summary: Pakistan's Human Rights Commission (HRCP) told Pol Off the situation in Balochistan is deteriorating, with continued reports of targeted killings, political kidnappings, and an increasingly present and powerful Taliban. The HRCP has publically called for a "demilitarization" of Balochistan, warning that if the government does not take corrective actions immediately the province "will erupt."

¶2. (U) Pol Off met October 15 with Dr. Iqbal Haider, Co-chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), a UN-recognized organization with over 3,000 members across 97 of Pakistan's 106 districts. Dr. Haider led HRCP's October 5-11 fact finding mission to Balochistan to interview residents, political and security officials, community groups, and human rights advocates. Post also spoke with NGOs, minority groups, and local HRCP representatives during an October 14-20 visit to Quetta, Balochistan.

¶3. (C) Dr. Haider told Pol Off that the situation in Balochistan is deteriorating, with continued reports of targeted killings, political kidnappings, and general violence. HRCP found escalating frustration and mistrust among Balochi residents toward the federal government. Of chief concern to the people are the targeted killing and disappearance of political and ethnic leaders. While there have been reports of disappearances in Balochistan numbering as high as 8,000, the HRCP has currently confirmed 198 cases, 30 of which occurred in ¶2009. Lawyers and residents said the judicial system has failed to adequately address the violence, citing the lack of arrests in high profile cases and the failure to bring those who are arrested to trial. Human rights workers also lamented the recent reluctance of Pakistan's Chief Justice to advocate on behalf of human rights in Balochistan.

¶4. (C) The intelligence services are widely believed to be behind a majority of the killings and kidnappings. Some residents noted that certain state enterprises and Pashtun groups - favored by the military - are taking advantage of the recent instability by obtaining land and businesses vacated by those being targeted. Residents told HRCP the lawlessness has become so pervasive that local security personnel are discouraged from wearing uniforms in public for fear of being attacked. This has led to increased ethnic, religious, and political violence with Punjab settlers and minority groups such as the Hazara being disproportionately targeted (cable on the Hazara community to follow).

¶5. (C) Dr. Haider said that "without a doubt" the Quetta Shura is operating in Balochistan - primarily out of IDP camps. (Comment: Although residents of Quetta acknowledge the presence of the Taliban and extremist groups in Balochistan, they were hesitant to confirm

the existence of the "Quetta Shura." End Comment.) Dr. Haider said the Taliban are making no secret of their presence in the region as they ride around in heavily armed convoys. Residents widely believe the intelligence agencies and security forces are either directly or tacitly supporting the Taliban in the region. He added that the Taliban have begun conducting criminal activities such as extortion with near impunity and are gaining influence within existing Pashtun communities, particularly in the northern areas surrounding the Chaman district, along the border of Afghanistan. Dr. Haider said the Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (a prominent Pashtun-based nationalist political party) has been particularly affected by "Talibanization," though he was unable to reconcile this with the Party's (publicly secular) leader, Mahmud Khan Achakzai.

¶6. (C) Likening Balochistan to "an active volcano that may erupt anytime," Dr. Haider warned that without action the independence movement will only get stronger as the authorities continue to clamp down. Following HRCF's fact finding mission the organization issued a press release calling for "the immediate demilitarization of Balochistan," urging the government to commit itself to Baloch-Pakistan reconciliation. Dr Haider believes that although the majority of the Baloch are against violence as a political tool and have no intention to break away from Pakistan, the region is on the tipping point as violence increases and the nationalist elements are emboldened by continued government neglect and discrimination.
FAKAN